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COOPERATION BETWEEN THE UNITED NATIONS AND THE AGENCY FOR CULTURAL AND TECHNICAL COOPERATION

Report of the Secretary-General

I. INTRODUCTION

1. On 16 October 1995, the General Assembly adopted without a vote resolution 50/3, entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Agency for Cultural and Technical Cooperation". In that resolution, the Assembly, affirming the need to establish cooperation, or strengthen such cooperation where it already exists, between the United Nations and the Agency in areas of common interest, noted with satisfaction the support expressed by the heads of State and Government of countries that use French as a common language for United Nations activities and their desire to begin a new partnership with the institutions of the United Nations system.

2. The General Assembly, also noting the complementarity of the activities of the Agency for Cultural and Technical Cooperation (ACTC) and the United Nations, as well as the programmes and other institutions of the United Nations system, invited the Secretary-General of the United Nations to take the necessary steps, in consultation with the Secretary-General of the Agency, to promote cooperation between the two secretariats, particularly by encouraging meetings that enable their representatives to consult one another on projects, measures and procedures that would facilitate and expand cooperation and coordination between the two organizations.

3. In the same resolution, the General Assembly decided to include in the provisional agenda of its fifty-second session the item entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Agency for Cultural and Technical

* A/52/150 and Corr.1.

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Cooperation", and requested the Secretary-General to submit a report on the implementation of the resolution.

4. The present report is submitted pursuant to that request.

II. COOPERATION AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE UNITED NATIONS AND THE AGENCY FOR CULTURAL AND TECHNICAL COOPERATION

5. Until 1995, General Assembly resolution 33/18 of 10 November 1978 had been the basis for cooperation between the United Nations and the Agency for Cultural and Technical Cooperation. In that resolution, the Assembly invited the Agency to participate in its sessions and in those of its subsidiary organs as an observer. By 1995, in addition to the usual consultations at the meetings, some United Nations departments and other entities that have mandates relating to the general thrust of the Agency's work were already collaborating with ACTC at the country level.

6. In the context of the implementation of General Assembly resolution 50/3, specifically paragraph 4 thereof, and in order to strengthen and enhance existing cooperation between the two organizations and to extend it to new areas such as preventive diplomacy, peacekeeping and peace-building, a draft agreement on cooperation between the United Nations and the Agency for Cultural and Technical Cooperation was prepared in close consultation with the ACTC secretariat.

7. On 25 June 1997, the cooperation agreement between the United Nations and ACTC was signed by the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the Secretary-General of ACTC. The full text of the agreement appears as an annex to the present report.

8. The agreement aims at strengthening relations between the two organizations through consultations on all matters of common interest, particularly in political, economic, social, scientific and cultural areas. Subject to such decisions as may be taken by their competent bodies concerning attendance at their meetings by observers, they shall invite each other to send representatives to their respective meetings where observers are allowed, whenever matters of shared interest are discussed. It also provides that the United Nations and ACTC may, through special arrangements, decide to act jointly in the implementation of projects that are of mutual interest. They may, whenever desirable, set up commissions, committees or other technical or advisory bodies to advise them on matters of common concern.

9. The agreement also contains provisions on ensuring effective cooperation between the secretariats of the two organizations and on arranging for the exchange, upon the request of the other, of information and documentation relating to specific areas or activities of common interest with a view to ensuring a better complementarity of action. In addition, each organization may bring to the attention of the other issues that, in its view, require joint coordinated action by the two organizations.

10. In remarks made at the signing ceremony, the Secretary-General of the United Nations said that the agreement reinforced the ties that had existed for almost two decades between the two institutions in a number of areas, particularly in the political, socio-economic, scientific and cultural domains. He expressed the hope that the agreement would lead to a more productive relationship enabling the two organizations to better serve the world community. The Secretary-General of ACTC reciprocated with similar sentiments, and thanked the Secretary-General of the United Nations for his efforts in that regard.

III. COOPERATION ACTIVITIES UNDERTAKEN OR PLANNED BY THE ORGANIZATIONS OF THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM

11. While some organizations of the United Nations system, in particular the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), have long-standing cooperation arrangements with ACTC, others, in pursuance of General Assembly resolution 50/3, have indicated a strong interest in developing close collaboration with the Agency. Included in this latter group are the United Nations political and economic and social departments (Department of Political Affairs, Department of Peacekeeping Operations and Department for Economic and Social Affairs) and the World Health Organization. The political departments of the United Nations Secretariat consider the Agency's support for the rule of law, promotion of human rights, democratization, human capacity-building and electoral assistance as strong potential areas, particularly in respect of cooperation for peacekeeping and peace-building programmes.

12. The Department for Economic and Social Affairs plans to cooperate with ACTC in the areas of governance, public administration and finance, civil service reforms, energy and environment through the organization of training workshops, seminars, meetings and conferences and the provision of technical assistance. The Department also envisions cooperation in the follow-up to major United Nations conferences, especially the World Summit for Social Development and the Fourth World Conference on Women. It has also indicated its interest in providing substantive support to ACTC training projects in relation to women's rights.

13. The United Nations Centre for Human Rights has continued and intensified its contacts with ACTC and cooperated in organizing a number of joint activities, including the following:

(a) Training programmes at Geneva and Bordeaux from 11 to 22 October 1993 in the handling of information technology in the field of human rights; 19 participants from 13 African countries were selected for this course;

(b) A regional seminar in Abidjan from 20 to 24 June 1994 on techniques for drafting and submitting the periodic reports that States parties to international human rights instruments are required to submit to the committees established under those instruments. The seminar brought together 28 participants from 14 Francophone African countries that were experiencing difficulties in drafting and submitting their reports;

(c) A training seminar on the drafting of national human rights reports at Bordeaux International School from 7 to 21 October 1994. The seminar was attended by 25 participants from 10 Francophone African countries.

14. Two United Nations funds and programmes, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), have signed cooperation agreements with ACTC that will be used as a basis for enhanced collaboration between the two organizations, particularly in support of field-level activities.

15. UNESCO and ACTC have maintained very close ties for many years. A formal cooperation agreement was signed between the two organizations in 1976. In 1990, this cooperation was intensified when the two organizations signed an additional protocol to the 1976 framework cooperation agreement, establishing, inter alia, consultative and permanent cooperation mechanisms through joint commissions, which have made it possible to develop and implement a number of specific projects in the fields of culture and education with a view to ensuring harmonious complementarity to activities in member States. Moreover, UNESCO takes part in all major events organized by the Agency, and the Agency participates in events sponsored by UNESCO.

16. In the field of education, emphasis is placed on basic formal and informal education, in particular the production of teaching aids and manuals, distance learning, teacher training and technical and vocational training. A working meeting is to be held in the near future in order to specify joint activities that could be the subject of operational projects.

17. In the field of culture, UNESCO and ACTC are cooperating closely in the implementation of the International Fund for the Promotion of the Study of African Languages and Cultures (FIDELCA) programme. Moreover, in 1997 UNESCO took part in, and contributed to, the organization of the Market for African Art and Entertainment (MASA), established in 1993 by ACTC and the Government of Côte d'Ivoire.

18. The World Health Organization has indicated its strong desire for future joint efforts with ACTC in substantive areas of their shared mandates.

19. The information on activities contained in the earlier sections of the present report indicates that collaboration between the United Nations and ACTC has begun. It is envisaged that the agreements that have now been signed between United Nations organizations and ACTC will be the basis for increased collaboration.

Annex

COOPERATION AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE UNITED NATIONS AND THE AGENCY FOR CULTURAL AND TECHNICAL COOPERATION

Considering the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations (hereinafter referred to as the UN) which calls, inter alia, for the promotion of regional and international cooperation to solve political, economic and social problems and to ensure respect for human rights in the world,

Considering the provisions of the Convention and of the Charter of the Agency for Cultural and Technical Cooperation (hereinafter referred to as the ACTC), which calls, inter alia, for the promotion of cooperation among its members and to encourage the emergence of a new solidarity, thus constituting an additional factor in the coming together of the peoples through the permanent dialogue of civilisations,

Recalling the relevant resolutions of the UN General Assembly, in particular resolution 33/18 by which ACTC was granted the observer status and resolution 50/3 calling for intensified cooperation between the two organizations,

Conscious of the need for closer cooperation between the UN and its specialized agencies on the one hand, and the ACTC and its specialized institutions on the other, in matters of common interest, and desirous of further enhancing and strengthening such cooperation,

The United Nations and the Agency for Cultural and Technical Cooperation

HAVE AGREED AS FOLLOWS:

Article I

AREAS OF COOPERATION

The UN and ACTC undertake to cooperate in the following areas, through their appropriate bodies:

1. Political,
2. Economic and social,
3. Scientific and cultural.

Article II

COOPERATION AND CONSULTATION

The UN and the ACTC shall hold consultations, as needed, on all matters of common interest with a view to coordinating and harmonizing their positions.

Article III

RECIPROCAL REPRESENTATION

1. Subject to such decisions as may be taken by its competent bodies concerning the attendance of its meetings by observers, and subject to the rules of procedure of the bodies concerned, the United Nations shall invite the ACTC to send representatives to United Nations meetings and conferences where observers are allowed, whenever matters of interest to the ACTC are discussed.

2. Subject to such decisions as may be taken by its competent bodies concerning the attendance of its meetings by observers, the ACTC shall invite the UN to send representatives to all its meetings and conferences where observers are allowed, whenever matters of interest to the UN are discussed.

Article IV

EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION AND DOCUMENTS

Subject to such arrangements as may be deemed necessary to safeguard the confidential nature of certain information and documents, the two organizations shall exchange information and documents on questions of common interest, in particular:

1. The UN shall make available to the ACTC, upon its request, information on any national or multinational projects and programmes that are undertaken by the UN in the political, economic, social, scientific and cultural fields, with its assistance or under its auspices in States members both of the UN and of the ACTC, and shall consider any proposals that may be communicated to it by the ACTC with a view to ensuring a better complementarity of action and a more effective coordination between the two organizations.

2. The ACTC shall make available to the UN, upon the latter's request, information on projects and programmes in the political, economic, social, scientific and cultural fields that relate to the development of ACTC activities in the latter's Member States. It shall consider any proposals concerning such projects and programmes that may be submitted to it by the UN with a view to ensuring better complementarity of action and a more effective coordination between the two organizations.

3. The UN may bring to the attention of the ACTC issues that, in its view, require joint and coordinated action by the two organizations.

4. The ACTC may bring to the attention of the UN those issues that, in its opinion, call for cooperation between the two organizations.

Article V

STATISTICAL AND LEGAL INFORMATION

The UN and the ACTC shall, subject to their respective rules and regulations, pool their efforts to:

- ensure optimum utilization of statistical and legal information and efficient use of their resources to compile, analyze, publish and disseminate such information;

- reduce the workload on governments and organizations from which such information is collected.

Article VI

ADMINISTRATIVE AND TECHNICAL

1. Should the growth of the UN and ACTC activities in fields of common interest so dictate, either organization may request the cooperation of the other whenever the latter organization is in a position to help develop the former's activities.

2. Each organization shall endeavour, insofar as possible and in compliance with its constituent instruments and decisions of its competent bodies, to respond favourably to such requests for cooperation in accordance with procedures to be mutually agreed upon.

3. Similarly, insofar as possible, and within the context of their constituent instruments and decisions of their respective competent bodies, the two organizations shall assist each other in the training of various categories of staff, especially administrative and conference staff as well as specialists in legal, economic, social, scientific and cultural fields.

Article VII

JOINT ACTION

1. The UN and the ACTC may, through special arrangements, decide to act jointly in the implementation of projects that are of common interest. The special arrangements shall define the modalities for the participation of each organization in such projects and shall determine the expenses payable by each of them.

2. The UN and the ACTC may, whenever they consider it desirable, set up commissions, committees or other technical or advisory bodies on terms and conditions, to be mutually agreed upon in each case, to advise them on matters of common interest.

Article VIII

COOPERATION BETWEEN THE SECRETARIATS

The Secretary-General of the UN and the Secretary-General of ACTC shall make appropriate administrative arrangements to ensure effective cooperation and liaison between the secretariats of the two organizations.

Article IX

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE AGREEMENT

1. The UN Secretariat and the ACTC Secretariat shall consult each other as needed on matters relating to the present agreement.

2. The UN Secretariat and the ACTC Secretariat may, if necessary, agree on supplementary administrative arrangements for the implementation of the present agreement.

Article X

ENTRY INTO FORCE, AMENDMENTS AND DURATION

1. This agreement shall enter into force on the date of its signature by the duly authorized representatives of the two organizations.

2. This agreement may be amended by mutual consent of the UN and the ACTC provided one of the parties presents the proposed amendments to the other in writing. The amendment shall enter into force after a period of three months following the expression of such consent.

3. Either of the parties may terminate this agreement by giving six months written notice to the other party.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the undersigned representatives of the Secretariat of the United Nations and the Secretariat of the Agency for Cultural and Technical Cooperation, being duly authorized by their respective authorities, have signed the present agreement in duplicate.

Signed this 25th day of June 1997 at the United Nations Headquarters in New York.

K. A. Annan
For the United Nations

Jean-Louis Roy
For the Agency for Cultural and
Technical Cooperation